

# What is the Capital Site Selection Study?

On August 27, 1974, Alaskans approved Initiative One, a measure to relocate the capital from Juneau to Western Alaska. With the passage of this Initiative, the extraordinary project of establishing a new capital at a new location was launched.

## A Search

The Capital Site Selection Study is a search for a new location for the seat of state government in today's mainstream of Alaskan life. A 9-member committee appointed by Governor J. H. Hammond is directing the 11-month study to select not more than three sites for the future capital and to prepare reports describing these sites. Voters of Alaska will cast the votes deciding

which of these sites will be the new home of Alaska State government on November 2, 1976. This decision will affect generations of Alaskans to come.

This search is the first step in implementing the Initiative. Once the location has been decided, other tasks lie ahead. The site will be planned in detail, buildings designed and constructed, and the move begun by October, 1980.

This news supplement will describe the selection process, the progress already made in the search for sites, and what is planned between now and the November, 1976 election.

## Alaskans want to know

### What are the Reasons for the Move?



#### Changes

In recent years, major events have changed the future of Alaska: the confirmation of oil at Prudhoe Bay on the North Slope, initial development of this oil field, and the go-ahead for construction of the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline. The economy which once centered on forest products, gold mining and salmon fishing now relies more on oil and natural gas.

Economic developments have been accompanied by population changes. Until the first part of this century, most Alaskans lived around seaports in the southeast. Like many other states with capitals located on rivers or in port cities, Alaska's capital in Juneau was once a center of population and trade. Today, however, 90 percent of Alaska's 350,000 people live west of meridian 141° west longitude, the area known as Western Alaska.

#### Communication

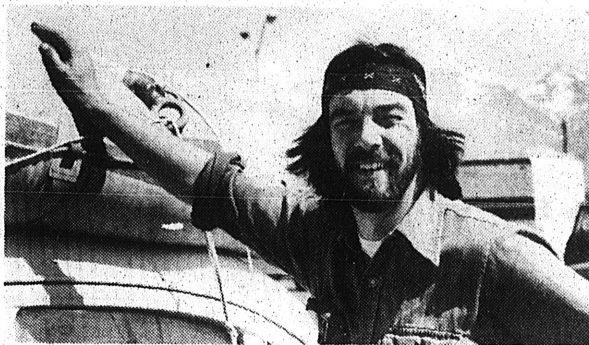
With these changes has come the need for hard decisions: decisions regarding population growth, highway expansion, wildlife management, oil and gas field development, and other resource policies. Alaskans want to participate in these decisions.

Participation depends on communication. Where most of the people live has become a new and important criteria in determining where the seat of government should be located. Response to a survey conducted by the Capital Site Selection Committee (CSSC) this spring indicated that people in the southeast have twice as much contact with legislators and government policy makers as people living in Western Alaska. The same survey also indicated that 60 percent of Alaskans think that moving the capital to a central area will help improve the overall communication between the majority of Alaskans and their government.

#### Transportation

Today, automotive, rail, and air transportation are more important than ships. The CSSC survey showed that more than 60 percent of Alaskans would prefer to travel to the capital by car. With a new capital centrally located, more people will be able to travel more easily than it is now possible to meet with their elected representatives.

### What is the Law?



The Initiative adopted by the voters in August, 1974 requires a capital site to be selected west of meridian 141° west longitude. The legislation specifies who is responsible for conducting the site selection process, how the site is to be selected, the timetable for selection, and the beginning of the relocation. In brief, Initiative One (A.S. 44.06) requires that:

A 9-member Capital Site Selection Committee appointed by the governor is to select not more than 3 potential capital sites by December 11, 1975. This committee may use whatever competent professional and technical assistance is necessary. The Committee is to prepare reports describing each of the sites for Alaska residents and to hold public hearings throughout the State within 18 months of December 11, 1974.

The sites selected by the Committee are to be located beyond a 30-mile radius of Anchorage and Fairbanks. All sites are to consist of at least 100 square miles. This land must be adjoining but not necessarily in a rectangular block. The state must own the land or be able to acquire it without charge. The sites are to be chosen with due regard to accessibility by road, railroad, and 24-hour airline service, and have suitable terrain for airport construction. Each of the locations is to be immediately classified as "reserve use land" by the Division of Land.

The site receiving the greatest number of votes in the next general election after the completion of the study—November 2, 1976—will become the new capital site.

The legislature shall provide funds for the CSSC. After the new capital is selected, the legislature shall provide for planning the new capital city and district within the bounds of the area selected, for the construction of necessary state and public facilities, and for their administration.

The move to the new capital shall begin not later than October 1, 1980.